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STATINTL

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Sunday, December 31, 1950
Monday, January 1, 1951
Tuesday, January 2, 1951

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PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT WINDING UP DEBATE ON
SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Winding up the debate on the Speech from the Throne, Premier Nuri As-Said hit back at the criticisms voiced by Deputy Leader of the Independence Party, Faiq As-Samarrai' and other deputies against his policy, and urged for the closing of ranks which, he said, is the greatest guarantee to success which is the basic policy of the Party he leads.

I have been criticized by the deputies on 4 main points, he said, these are:

1 - My failure to refer to the Palestine catastrophe and to the government's remedial plans, in the Speech from the Throne;

2 - My failure to define the government's policy in respect of our foreign relations, particularly with the British Government;

3 - Contradiction of my statement made at the Party's Congress with that delivered in Parliament relating to Feudalism and feudalists;

4 - The allegation that I draw up a certain program and act differently, and that I have failed to rescue Palestine, as outlined in the program of my previous Cabinet, and have surrendered it to the Jews.

Replying to the first question he cites the passage "...any aggression against any of its regions - i.e. the Arab East - will be regarded by the Arabs as directed against the dearest and most sacred part of the Arab East" which is outlined in the Speech. This expression, he continues, undoubtedly and evidently means 'Palestine' and not North Korea or Tibet.

Also he cites another passage on the same subject which says "... these dangers surrounding us necessitate that we take up with the sister Arab States the question of seeking solutions and plans which would guarantee our security and realize the

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aspirations of the Arab nation."

You will gather from the foregoing, he says, that it would be unfair to accuse me of having dropped the Palestine question.

Refuting the allegations referred to in the second point, he mentions an excerpt from the statement he made at the Party's congress which said: "...This Treaty has become outdated and is inconsistent with developments in the world, all the more so that the UN Charter ranks the big and small nations on equal footing... that he sincerely joins the Egyptian peoples' discontent over the 1936 Treaty..... that our relations with the British Government should be based on principles which would not impair our sovereignty and national integrity, and that the foreigner would not have the right to have military bases on Iraqi territory in peacetime."

He also makes another reference to the passage in the Speech from the Throne which says: "While the Arab East was hoping that world developments would change relations based on treaties which served their purpose and have become contrary to the letter and spirit of the UN Charter set up after World War II to establish peace and realize equality and justice..."

The third reference to these relations, he outlined, is made in his Wednesday's statement in Parliament which says: "our relations with the British originated by way of India, and because India has become an independent State, we will have to reconsider these relations."

In my foregoing statement, he adds, I aimed at taking up this vital question with the Arab States because we should not, in view of world developments consider these relations as before. It is my opinion, he said, that there should be Arab cooperation because there is a general willingness to view the frontiers between the Arab States as local ones, i.e., that any of the Egyptian boundaries not adjoining the Arabs, be regarded by Iraq as its own, and any of Iraq's boundaries not adjoining the Arabs, be regarded by Egypt as its own.

With this in view, he added, we should coordinate our foreign policy and defend the security of our country in order to realize the aspirations of the Arab people, including Iraq. We cannot deviate from this objective until we discuss and consult with the appropriate authorities of the State the means which would secure our safety and realize the aspirations of our people.

Referring to point three concerning feudalism, he says that this is clearly given in para 5 of my Congress Party's address which says "Is it possible for the government to continue the distribution of new state-owned lands in a manner that would create feudalism?"

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Comparing Egypt's cultivated land with Iraq, he says that Egypt with a population of over 20 million inhabitants lives on the agricultural produce of only 5 million donums, while in Iraq after the studied plans are implemented by the Development Board, namely, the construction of Dams over the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and others on the two Zabs and on Diala, we would have approximately 15 million donums to feed only 5 million people, which, whether we like it or not, would make all Iraq in the eye of those who envy us, a feudal State.

If we really wished to take back this land, to whom shall we give them, he queries? Furthermore, he said, that in his parliamentary statement he called for the encouragement of agriculture and stated that Iraq's policy was aimed to give lands in moderate areas.

Touching on the last point dealing with the Palestine question, he said: "We should seriously examine the causes of the Palestine tragedy in order to avoid any further calamities and give a true picture of the whole case."

Here Nuri As-Said cited two paragraphs from a very confidential document prepared by the Joint Army Staff regarding Palestine. These are: "Article 3(a) Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Palestine, Arab armies were not adequately equipped with arms and ammunition to engage in a long war". And also: "Article 3(d) Prior to the adoption of any military resolutions, politicians should at all times acquaint the military authorities of the political situation which demands military intervention in order that such resolutions may conform with the Armies' potentialities."

We should admit, he continued, our mistakes and correct them to avoid a repetition, as more throw of words would not restore Palestine to us, but would forfeit us the time to the advantage of foreigners and enemies.

Continuing his discussion of the Palestine question, he adds: "When I came to power - that was in my previous Cabinet - to implement the resolution adopted by the Majlis, i.e., to strive to draw up a unified military and political plan to save Palestine....., the Egyptian Delegation was on its way to Rhodes to negotiate truce. Does anyone imagine I am a fool to say that Iraq alone could save Palestine without the support of the Arab States, especially those adjoining it? I am not pessimistic and shall remain so in spite of all the hardships confronting us, and request our new generation to feel the same, for if we shall not overcome these hardships today, it will be tomorrow."

"After all the efforts exerted by H.E. Jamil Al-Madfai, Ismail Safwat, and myself, we were faced with the news of the signature of the truce in Rhodes between the Egyptian Government and the British Government, which allowed the other Arab States adjoining

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Palestine. Will the Iraqi Army remain on the territory of a government which signed the truce, and fight by itself? Is that what you ask of the Iraqi government whose people are still hungry and who is denied some 6 million dinars annually from the oil royalty? Imagine Iraq receiving this income and distributing it to the poor."

"We should therefore collaborate internally and externally to seek a way that would compensate for us this tragedy, if not today, tomorrow. I am optimistic in the face of all these hardships, and urge you therefore to cooperate with me in closing the ranks."

Concluding his statement he promised that he will submit a bill entitled 'from where did you get this' to judge everyone including himself.

Later one of the deputies tabled a motion to end debate on the Speech from the Throne, which was accepted. The reply of the Speech from the Throne was then put to vote and passed by 79 to 19 votes. (Al-Ittihad Ad-Dasturi. 12/31)

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LEBANESE-IRAQ ECONOMIC AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

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According to a report from Beirut, the Lebanese Council of Ministers has approved the economic agreement between Iraq and the Lebanon, and entrusted H.E. Kadhim As-Solh, Lebanese Minister in Iraq, with its signature. This agreement will come into operation upon signature and will be valid for one year to be extended on agreement by both parties. It provides for the duty-free clearance of Lebanese fruits and Iraqi dates and grains (Al-Hatuf. 1/2/51)

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Commenting on the decision of India and Pakistan to remain within the British Commonwealth, referred to in Premier Nuri As-Said's statement, Liwa Al-Istiqlal says that we should in no way compare our position with that of India because Nehru has made it clear that India is not bound to carry out any decision of the Commonwealth on foreign policy. Moreover, Iraq's position is very much different because the British influence is so widely spread in Iraq that even the well-known politicians like Mr. Churchill have admitted that they don't give much weight to any official declarations by Iraq which are only meant for local consumption. As an example, he adds, Nuri's statement branding the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty as 'outdated' was not given any prominence in the British House of Parliament whereas the Egyptian Government's similar statement raised a strong opposition. (Liwa Al-Istiqlal. 1/1)